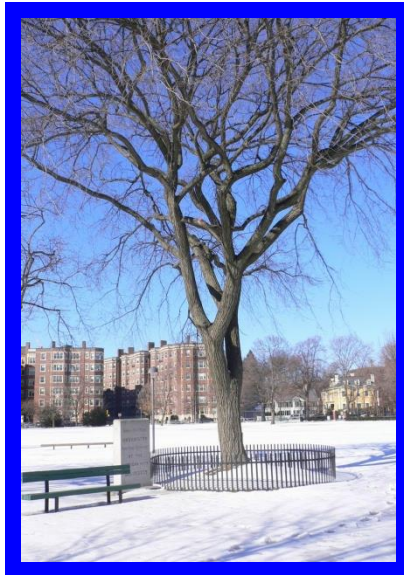


One year of the American Revolution -- April 1775 to March 1776 -- viewed from Cambridge Common.

5th grade classes, Cambridge Friends School
March 2013



Americans know the Revolution began in Boston and at the Battles of Lexington & Concord.



- But a lot of it happened in Cambridge:
- Everything important in the 1st year of the Revolutionary War -- April 1775 to March 1776 -- passed through Cambridge Common !

What is Cambridge Common?

- A Common was a place where all residents could graze their cows.
- Not long after the Mayflower, the Puritans started the town,
- and in 1630 established the Common.

The Puritan



In those days, Cambridge Common extended all the way up to present-day Linnaean Street.

The oldest house in Cambridge shows where people's homes began again.



Cooper-Frost-Austin House

This plaque shows
the view of two houses
that were across
Garden Street from
the Common
200 years ago.

Imagine you were
a 9-year-old child living
in one of them.

What could you have
seen from your doorstep
between April 1775
and May 1776?



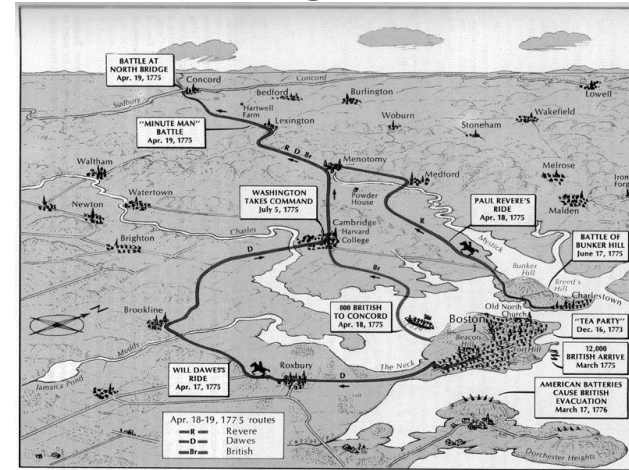
The night of April 18, 1775



- William Dawes rode through Cambridge Common, on his way from Boston to Lexington to warn that the British army was coming.
- Paul Revere was riding from Charleston to do the same.
- Revere was supposed to come through Cambridge too, but had to circle north to evade a British patrol near present-day Union Square, before meeting up with Dawes.

The British came through East Cambridge (Second St. to Gore St.).

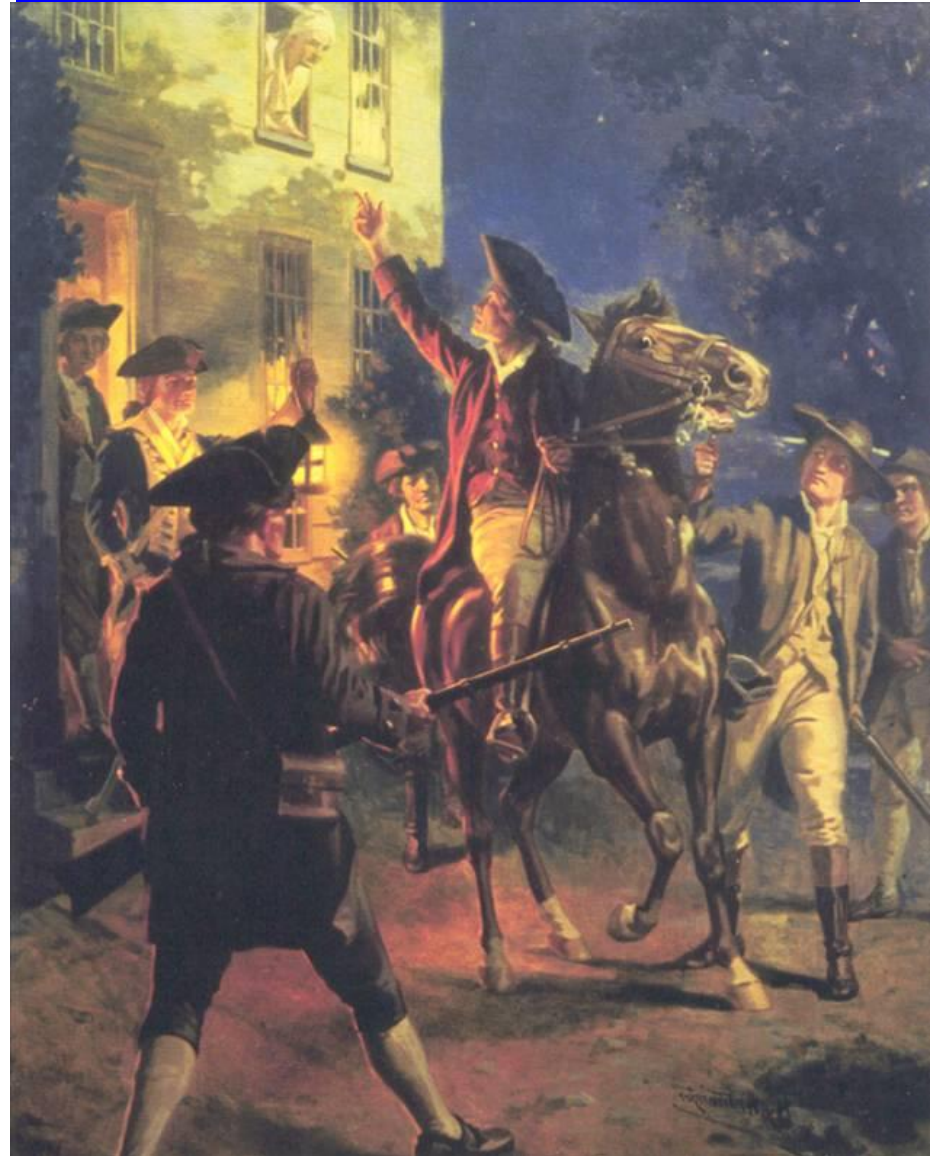
Reinforcements came through the Common.



The Boston Region at the Opening of the War of Independence, 1773-1776

Paul Revere is more famous

- Longfellow wrote “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere.”





The midnight ride

- Longfellow lived at 105 Brattle St. (“Tory Row”),
 - *Today it is the Longfellow Historical Site.*
 - *He is buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery.*



The midnight ride

- *“Dawes Island” at the southern tip of the Common has bronze horseshoes in the ground in commemoration,*



- *and signs explaining Cambridge history.*

Signs at Dawes Island explain Cambridge history



April 19, 1775:

The battles of Lexington & Concord.

- In Massachusetts we celebrate April 19 every year as Patriot's Day.
- Some Cambridge Minutemen went to the battles.



Cambridge Minutemen

- Others waited in North Cambridge to ambush the redcoats on their way back to Boston

(where Rindge Ave. comes into Mass.Ave., "Watson's Corner." Marker at 2158 Mass.Ave.)



- Several were killed by British soldiers
 - and are buried in The Old Burying Ground.*

The Old Burying Ground is across the street from the Common



The cemetery contains the graves of 19 Revolutionary soldiers,

- including two African-Americans named Neptune Frost & Cato Stedman.

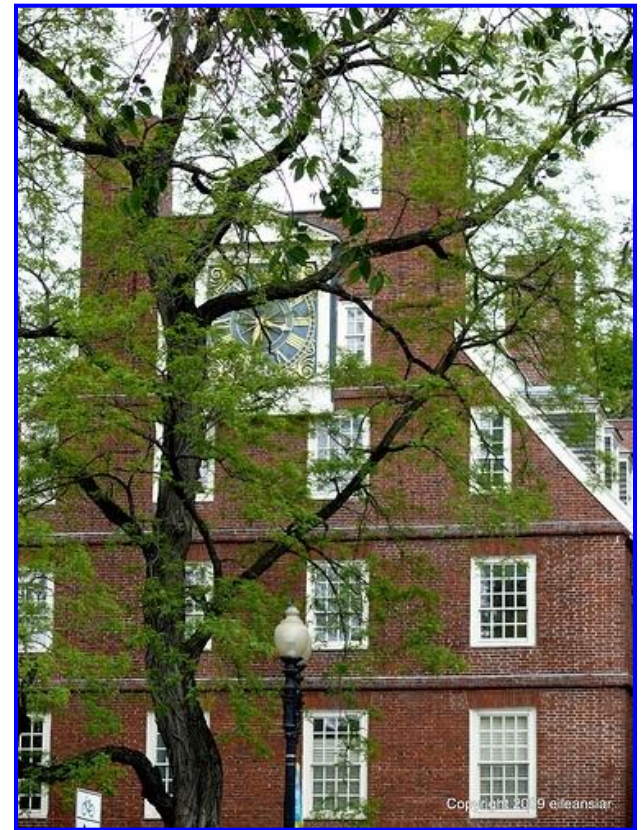
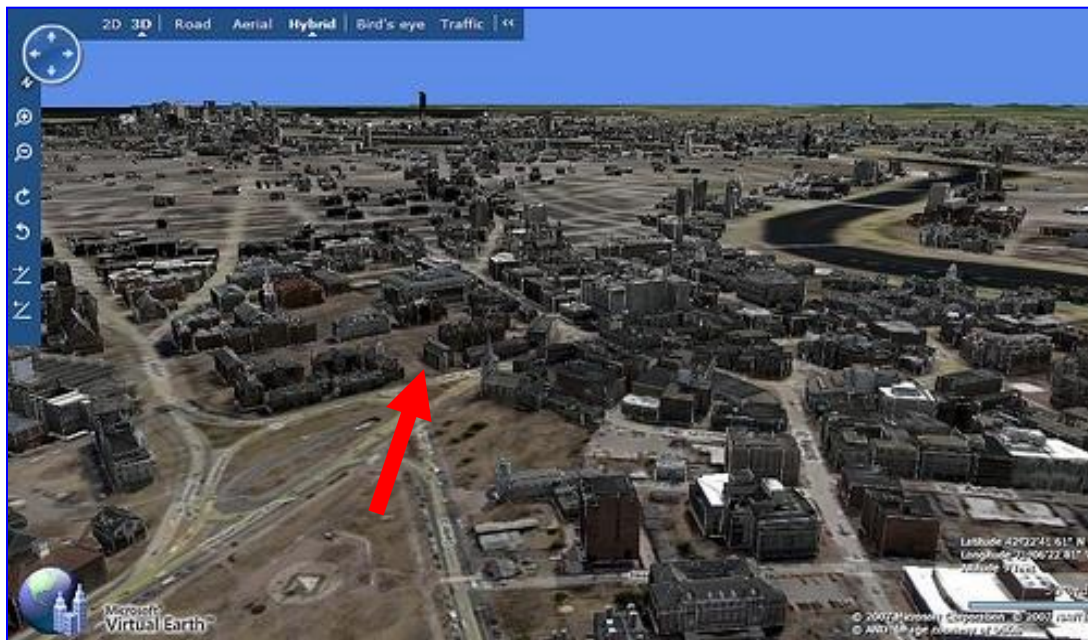


A granite shaft was placed on the spot.

May 1, 1775: Harvard was evacuated.

- The officers of the new army moved in.

Right across Mass. Ave. from the Common.



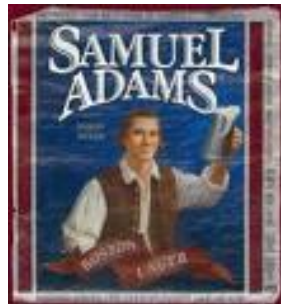
*Massachusetts Hall is today
the Harvard President's office.*

Most of the major leaders of the Revolution in Massachusetts had gone to school at Harvard University

- John Hancock



- Sam Adams



- John Adams

who was more important,
but worried that nobody would
remember him for anything !

*They took classes in Harvard Hall,
which is still there.*



- An army of 20,000 Americans gathered at the Common and pitched their tents.
- On June 13 they marched off to the Battle of Bunker Hill in Charlestown.

*They went along the
Charlestown-Watertown
path (now Kirkland Street).
Marker maps show the way.*



The Battle of Bunker Hill

- June 17, 1775.

- “Don’t fire until you see the whites of their eyes!”

- *After the battle, the Ruggles-Fayerweather House at 175 Brattle Street was used as a hospital for the wounded.*



George Washington

- After Lexington & Concord, John Adams proposed to the Continental Congress making George Washington commander of the Continental Army.
- He arrived in Cambridge July 2, 1775.



General Washington is shown July 3, 1775, taking command of the Continental Army.



From a drawing
by Paul Hawthorne, 1941.
<http://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org/chistory/section5.htm>

A monument
shows Washington taking command



The Sheraton Commander Hotel

- across Garden Street
- is called that because Washington was Commander in Chief.
- It has a statue of him.



The Sheraton Commander Hotel also has a “diorama” showing Washington taking command of the troops near a famous elm tree.



The Washington Gate

explains to visitors
entering from
Harvard Square.



“Near this spot
on July 3, 1775,
George Washington
took command of
the American Army.”

Where exactly was the Washington Elm?

- It sat in the middle of what became Garden St.
- The tree finally fell over in 1923.
- They paved the street and just moved the same monument to another tree !



But the story of the tree is explained

- in other places.



- Across the park, a “scion” of the Washington Elm was grown from a cutting.



Martha Washington

came from Virginia
to join her husband
in Cambridge.

They stayed on Tory Row in
the same house where
Longfellow later lived.

They attended a service at
Christ Church across the
street from the Common,
Dec.31, 1775. *It is still there.*



Jan. 1, 1776:
The Continental Army got a new flag
The “Cambridge flag” (or “Union flag”)



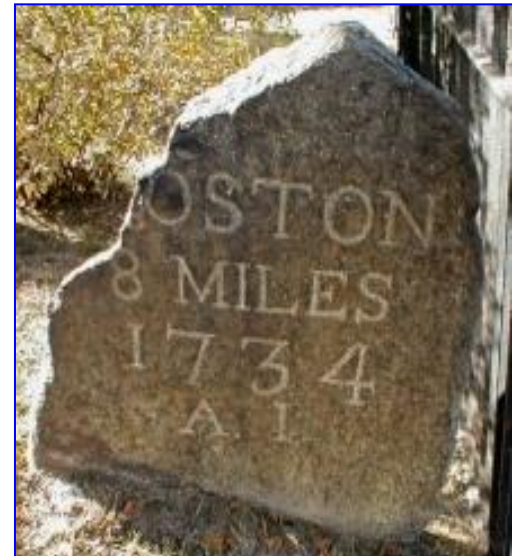
The road from Boston to Philadelphia

January 24, 1776: John Adams passed through the Common on horseback, on his way to Philadelphia to help write the Declaration of Independence.



- The road from Boston to New York & Philadelphia passed through Cambridge.

- *The original stone marker lies across the street from Dawes Island. It points the way to the bridge across the Charles River.*

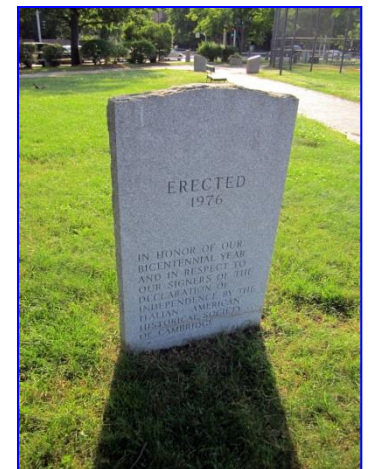


The Declaration of Independence

- “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...”



- It was agreed on July 4, 1776.
 - So we celebrate the Fourth of July
 - as Independence Day

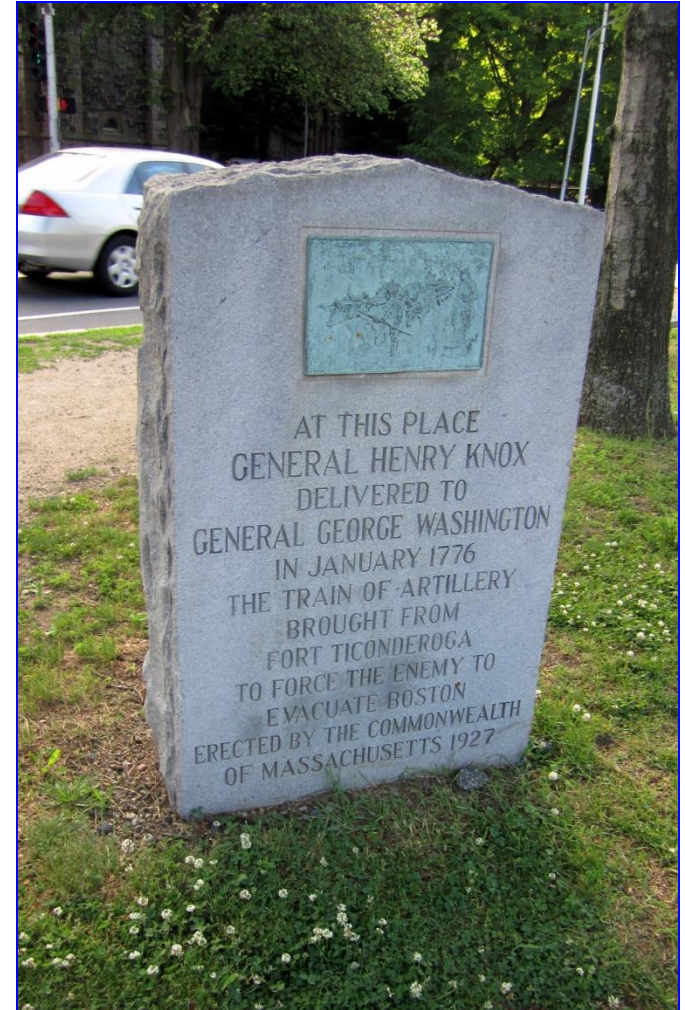


- The British army holed up in Boston all winter.
- Washington did not know how to get them out.
- Henry Knox, the 25-year-old owner of a Boston bookstore who had read a lot of military books, joined the army.
- He proposed a plan to Washington.
- He went to Fort Ticonderoga, 300 miles away in New York.
 - It had been captured from the British in May.



Knox took the cannon from the fort, and dragged them across the snow in giant sleds,

- arriving back in Cambridge Common
- on Jan. 24, 1776,
- where he presented them to Washington.



The British evacuation of Boston

- The British general Gage woke up and, looking at Dorchester Heights, saw Knox's cannons facing down at him from the hilltop.
- March 17, 1776: The British quickly left Boston.



Evacuation Day, March 17

- Boston celebrates Evacuation Day each year.
- The fighting moved on to New York and then New Jersey, never to return to Massachusetts.

*Some cannon left behind
by the British army were
brought to Cambridge
Common to mark the event.*



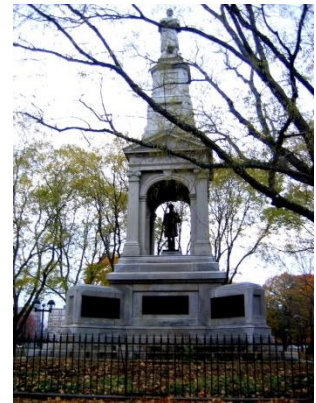
The cannon on the Common were taken from Fort Independence *which you can visit today in South Boston*



Abraham Lincoln

- 1863: Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address
- It begins by referring to 1776:
“Four score & seven years ago
our forefathers brought forth
on this continent a new nation,
conceived in liberty, and
dedicated to the proposition
that all men are created equal.”
- *The Civil War Memorial,
with a statue of Lincoln,
dominates the center of
Cambridge Common.*



[illegible]

- Some famous fighters came from France & Poland to join the American Revolution.
 - They wanted to try out similar revolutions in their own countries.

Memorials to Tadeusz Kosciuszko & Casimir Pulaski



Prince Hall

was an African-American abolitionist who campaigned to allow blacks to be soldiers in the Revolution and to be Freemasons.



Prince Hall
monument

Immigrants from Ireland

- Irish Famine (1847)

monument

